
TO THE PRINTERS
OF
JACKSON'S OXFORD JOURNAL.

SIRS,

YOUR having stated, in the Parliamentary Proceedings of the House of Peers, Tuesday, November 10, on the Order of the Day for the second Reading of the Bill "for the better securing His Majesty's Person and Government," &c. that "Lord Abingdon began a *Desultory* Speech, with some Observations on the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, and, having made some *general* Remarks on Whigs and Tories, concluded with "giving his Negative to the Bill" is the Reason why a more fair, candid, and authentic Account is transmitted to you, for Insertion in your following Journal.

Disjointed Representations of either what Lord Abingdon did say, or was prevented from continuing to say, have occasioned him to commit this Result of his Recollections to the Press, in Order that it may be handed down *Pro Bono Publico* to the latest Posterity.

The Order of the Day having been read, his Lordship observed that the *Constitution*, then in Debate, having been
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often referred to, and the Authority of Sir William Blackstone often quoted, he denied the Authority to be of any sufficient Validity; for, no *actual Definition* was to be found in the learned Judge's Commentaries, but merely Citations and Allusions. He begged Lords in Administration to define it. He asked, if the *King, Lords, and Commons* were *Omnipotent, Supreme, INFALLIBLE in all Cases whatsoever?* and, if so, where were the Rights of the People to be found? and he was confident that, if his Ears did not mistrust him, a learned Law-Lord (Lord Thurlow) had had Manliness sufficient (though it was the very Ground that placed his Lordship on the Woolfack) to recant that Doctrine on the *Quebec Act*.

The next Ground he took was on *Reform*.

He said, that, for Brevity's Sake, and in Order not to trespass on their Lordship's Time and Patience, he would put it into the Form of a Syllogism, viz. That a Reform of Parliament was in itself an Overt Act, the manifest Intent of which was to alter the Government of a Country; and to alter the Government of a Country was *constructively* to depose the King.

To depose the King, was, by the twenty-fifth of Edward the Third, High Treason.

Ergo, A *Reform* in Parliament was High Treason.

He, now, commenced on the Bill for the Preservation of his Majesty's *Person and Government*; and, here, referred them to the whole Tenour of his Parliamentary Conduct, as it stood recorded, by his own Revision and *Authority*, on the Parliamentary Registers, which would, at once, carry Conviction to every Lord's Mind, of the Integrity and Independency of his Proceeding; and that whenever he saw in Ministers any Disposition to extend his Majesty's *Prerogative* beyond its Boundaries and Limits, he thought it incumbent on him, as one of his Hereditary Councillors, to oppose it; that his Majesty should enforce his *true Prerogative*, and Nothing, with his Concurrence, beyond what the Laws and Constitution had guaranteed to him. He thought that no other Remedy than the Laws in being was essential for the Preservation of the Royal Personage; and that our Laws were too numerous by half; and that it was a wise Observation of the Great and Immortal Lock, in his Fundamental Constitutions of *Carolina*, wherein he "expresses and advises that, to avoid Multiplicity of Laws
" which, by Degrees, always change the Right Foundations
" of the Original Government, all Acts of Parliament
" whatsoever,

“ whatsoever, in whatsoever Form passed or enacted, shall,
 “ at the End of one hundred Years after their enacting,
 “ respectively cease and determine of themselves, and,
 “ without any *Repeal*, become null and void, as if no such
 “ Act and Laws had ever been made, since Multiplicity of
 “ Comments, as well as of Laws, have great Inconve-
 “ niencies, and serve only to obscure and perplex.”

The same Author goes on and says: “ It is a great Mis-
 “ take in *Counsels*, or *worse*, that there should be so much
 “ Pains taken, by the Court, to debase and bring low the
 “ House of Peers, if a Military Government be not in-
 “ tended by some: For, the Power of *Peerage* and a *Stand-*
 “ *ing Army* are like two Buckets, the Proportion that one
 “ goes *down* the other exactly goes *up*; and I refer You to
 “ the Considerations of all the History of Ours, or of any
 “ of our Neighbour Northern Monarchies, whether Stand-
 “ ing Forces, Military and Arbitrary Government, came
 “ not plainly in by the same Steps that the Nobility were
 “ lessened: Witness! the *White Rose* and the *Red*, that
 “ changed Fortunes often to the Ruin, Slaughter, and Be-
 “ heading of the Great Men!”

His Lordship remarked, that if Mr. Lock's Scheme were
 to be put into Execution, by the Legislature of this Coun-
 try, it would be more beneficial to the Community than
 any fresh Laws innovating upon the Constitution; and that
 he did not, in his Conscience, think that any Laws since
 the unfortunate bloody American Contest, in this Reign,
 were, strictly and righteously, founded on a Constitutional
 Basis, but, in direct Violation of them, both in Church and
 State: That he professed himself to be neither *Whig* nor
Tory; but, a CONSTITUTIONALIST, and that if an *Uniformity*
 in the State for the uniting of the contending Parties (which
 had often been suggested, but never accomplished by our
 Predecessors), viz. of Those who are for the *British* Consti-
 tution and Those who are against it, being a Distinction
 that ought to be perpetual; which desirable End could never
 be effected without an *Act for Uniformity* in the true Notions
 of the Constitution of the *British* Kingdom and Govern-
 ment, as the only *Expedient* to pull up by the Roots all Se-
 ditions, Tumults, Treasonable Conspiracies, Rebellions,
 and even *Party Distinction*!

In Conclusion, his Lordship said that, however, if in
 Times like these, he was coerced into any Party, it would
 be that of the Moderate Tory, as described by the profound
 and memorable Historian, Mr. Rapin, who seems, with a

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Statesman-like Foresight, to peep into the Womb of Futurity, and to be present with his Remedy for the present calamitous Moment. "The *Moderate* Tory (observes Mr. Rapin) is one who would never suffer the King to lose *any* of his *Prerogatives*, but, neither would he *sacrifice* the Rights of the People. These (he adds) are TRUE ENGLISHMEN; have frequently saved the State, and *will* save it again, whenever it shall be in Danger, either by the *violent* Tories, or from the *Republican* Whigs."

☞ *The further Continuation of this very important Constitutional Debate, now assumes a London Type.*

Friday,